

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 10-11 are amended, new claim 21 is added, and claim 3 is canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-2 and 4-21 are pending.

The amendments to the claims and the added new claim 21 are based on the application as originally filed, so it is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

In the office action, claims 1-5, 7-15, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of The Jimmy Fund (www.jimmyfund.org); and claims 6 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of The Jimmy Fund (www.jimmyfund.org) and U.S. published application number US 2005/0033669 A1 of Stremler et al.

Claim 3 is canceled. Claims 1 and 11 are amended to recite that the claimed method and system, respectively, have an information menu accessed by user using automated telephone menus and Internet menus, provide an interactive process accessed by the user using telephone means and Internet means; and tools accessed by the user using telephone means and Internet means, with the tools for:

recruiting additional volunteers;

managing and scheduling the volunteer activities of the additional volunteers to complete volunteer tasks; and

communicating details related to progress of the volunteer group program to all interested parties.

Neither The Jimmy Fund (www.jimmyfund.org) nor Stremler et al. have an information menu accessed by user using automated telephone menus and Internet menus, provide an interactive process accessed by the user using telephone means and Internet means, and provide

the specific tools accessed by the user using telephone means and Internet means, as in the present invention.

The Jimmy Fund only shows phone numbers. Page 12, section 1 of The Jimmy Fund has a telephone number listed for “Questions”, and page 18 has a telephone number listed “For more information: Call: Emily Quinn”.

There is no disclosure or suggestion in The Jimmy Fund that any automated telephone menus are provided to implement the information menu, or that such telephone numbers in The Jimmy Fund provide an interactive process or the specific tools of the present invention. On the contrary, The Jimmy Fund limits such telephone numbers as providing only a source for answers to questions or access to a person for additional information, with no mechanism beyond the telephone number such as automated telephone menus.

In fact, The Jimmy Fund teaches away from the present invention, in that The Jimmy Fund uses a person “Emily Quinn”, instead of an automated telephone menu as in the present invention, to answer questions and to provide information.

One skilled in the art would not look to The Jimmy Fund for the elements, steps, and features of the present invention, since incorporation of automated telephone menus requires additional expenses, telephone hardware and software, and technical implementation compared to the mere use of a human operator with her own telephone to answer information questions. The present invention requires such enhanced and automated functionality to provide all of the features to initiate and manage a volunteer group program. On the contrary, The Jimmy Fund only provides simple information through a telephone number with a human operator.

Stremmer et al. does not cure the deficiencies of The Jimmy Fund, since Stremmer et al. only allows for the listing of contact telephone numbers, such as shown in paragraphs [0403] and [0406] of the disclosure of Stremmer et al.

There is no disclosure or suggestion in Stremmer et al. that any automated telephone menus are provided for an information menu using such contact telephone numbers, or that such contact telephone numbers in Stremmer et al. provide an interactive process or the specific tools of the present invention.

Accordingly, claims 1-2 and 4-20 are patentable over The Jimmy Fund (www.jimmyfund.org) and Stremmer et al., so reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

New claim 21 is added which recites a method in a computer system for initiating and managing customizable volunteer group programs that include a plurality of volunteers, the method comprising: providing an information menu of predetermined program types consisting of typical individual and group challenges to be addressed, including catastrophic medical events, natural disasters, fires, providing care for an aging loved one, the arrival of a new baby, etc., including an "Other" option to accommodate virtually any major life challenge imaginable; providing an interactive process to the user through the computer system to enable the user to select at least one of the program types on the menu to pursue; generating and outputting electronically, from the computer system, an organizational framework based on the at least one selected type, with specific roles, responsibilities, and features needed to meet the challenges typical of situations of that type; providing tools for: customizing the roles, responsibilities, and features typical of a program type to reflect the unique needs of the individual or group facing that type of challenge and being supported by the volunteer group program; recruiting additional

volunteers; managing and scheduling the efforts of the additional volunteers; and communicating details related to progress of the volunteer group program to all interested parties; providing an option to the user to set a requirement of password access to control access of others to a World Wide Web site associated with the volunteer group program and accessible through the computer system; providing project timelines, procedures, content guidelines, examples, and editable copy from the computer system for use by the additional volunteers; and providing promotional materials generated by the computer system to build awareness of the volunteer group programs among potential new volunteers.

Claim 21 is patentable over the cited art, since the cited art does not disclose or suggest such customizable volunteer group programs that include a plurality of volunteers. In addition, the cited art does not disclose or suggest providing an information menu of predetermined program types consisting of typical individual and group challenges to be addressed, including catastrophic medical events, natural disasters, fires, providing care for an aging loved one, the arrival of a new baby, etc., including an "Other" option to accommodate virtually any major life challenge imaginable, as in new claim 21.

In addition, the cited art does not generate and output electronically, from the computer system, an organizational framework based on the at least one selected type, with specific roles, responsibilities, and features needed to meet the challenges typical of situations of that type, as in new claim 21. Finally, the cited art does not provide tools for at least customizing the roles, responsibilities, and features typical of a program type to reflect the unique needs of the individual or group facing that type of challenge and being supported by the volunteer group program, as in new claim 21.

On the contrary, the method and system used in The Jimmy Fund are limited to activities benefiting The Jimmy Fund exclusively. The method and system in The Jimmy Fund are not customizable or flexible in a way that can help organize volunteer support activities to benefit any individual or group facing a challenge, as in the present invention.

Similarly, the remaining cited art, such as Stremmer et al. as well as the published patent applications cited on page 9 of the office action are also limited in functionality and are not customizable as is the system and method of the present invention. U.S. published application number US 2004/0225518 to Bain is limited to fundraising use by non-profit organizations, and U.S. published application number US2005/0021352 to Maierhofer et al. refers to a method for managing sports groups.

Therefore, new claim 21 is patentable over the cited art, so entry and favorable consideration of claim 21 are respectfully requested.

Accordingly, entry and approval of the present amendment and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

In case of any deficiencies in fees by the filing of the present amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such deficiencies in fees to Deposit Account Number 01-0035.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: October 27, 2006

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